

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 17 July 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Bogumil Sujka (Poland)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 565th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In conformity with its programme of work, the Conference starts today its consideration of agenda item 4, "Chemical weapons". However, in accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

As there are some organizational questions pending, including requests from non-member States to participate in the informal meetings on the substance of agenda items 2 and 3, the Conference will hold an informal meeting once the list of speakers is exhausted. We shall later resume the plenary meeting and formalize any decisions agreed upon at the informal meeting.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of the United Kingdom and Japan.

I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Solesby.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom): On 26 June I made a statement on behalf of the delegations of Belgium, Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, the United States and the United Kingdom, to introduce a message and communiqué from the Ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council at Turnberry on 7 and 8 June. Today, on behalf of the same delegations, I have circulated as CD/1013 the text of the Declaration on a transformed North Atlantic Alliance issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the North Atlantic Council in London on 5 and 6 July.

As before, I would urge delegates to read the text in full, but it might be helpful for me to draw attention to some of the major points.

The Heads of State and Government of the Alliance recognize that Europe has entered a new, promising era. The Alliance must and will adapt.

The North Atlantic Alliance must continue to provide for the common defence, to extend the long peace enjoyed these past four decades. Yet security and stability do not lie solely in the military dimension, and the political component of the Alliance should be enhanced. The Allies must work together not only for the common defence, but to build new partnerships with all the nations of Europe. The Atlantic Community must reach out to the countries of the East and extend to them the hand of friendship.

The unification of Germany means that the division of Europe is also being overcome. A united Germany in the Atlantic Alliance of free democracies, and part of the growing political and economic integration of the European Community, will be an indisputable factor of stability. The move within the European Community towards political union, including the development of a European identity in the domain of security, will also contribute to Atlantic solidarity and to the establishment of a just and lasting order of peace throughout the whole of Europe.

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

The Alliance will never in any circumstances be the first to use force. The Allies propose a joint declaration between member States of the two alliances which will make clear they are no longer adversaries, and invite other member States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to join in this commitment to non-aggression.

The Allies invite President Gorbachev and representatives of the other Central and Eastern European countries to address the North Atlantic Council, and to establish regular diplomatic liaison with NATO. This will make it possible to share with them Allied thinking and deliberations in this historic period of change. The Allies also offer intensive military contacts, and propose another CSCE military doctrine seminar this autumn. The Allies intend to establish an entirely different quality of openness in Europe, including an agreement on "open skies".

The Declaration sets out a common approach on conventional arms control in the period up to the 1992 Helsinki CSCE meeting and beyond. It attaches the highest priority to completing this year a Conventional Forces in Europe agreement, as well as a package of confidence- and security-building measures. Immediately after signature of the CFE agreement, follow-on talks with the same membership and mandate should start, focused on limiting manpower in Europe. At the time this treaty is signed, a commitment will be given on manpower levels in a unified Germany. Beyond 1992, the Alliance foresees new conventional arms control negotiations, within the CSCE framework, aimed at further far-reaching measures to limit the offensive capability of conventional armed forces in Europe. This is an ambitious agenda, but it matches our goal: enduring peace in Europe.

On force structures, the declaration reaffirms the importance of North American conventional and United States nuclear forces in Europe. It also points the way to a reshaping of the conventional forces in Europe of NATO's integrated force structure towards smaller, more mobile units, made up of an increasingly multinational corps. NATO's integrated force structure will scale back the readiness of its active units, and rely more heavily on the possibility for reinforcements.

The Declaration reaffirms the key principles of the Alliance's strategy: to keep the peace, the Alliance must maintain for the foreseeable future an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces, based in Europe, and kept up-to-date where necessary. But, as a defensive Alliance, NATO has always stressed that none of its weapons will ever be used except in self-defence and that we seek the lowest and most stable level of nuclear forces needed to secure the prevention of war.

The political and military changes in Europe, and the prospects of further changes, now allow the Allies concerned to modify the size and adapt the task of their nuclear deterrent forces:

The Allies concerned will need far fewer nuclear weapons, particularly sub-strategic nuclear systems of the shortest range;

They are willing to eliminate nuclear artilleries from Europe in return for reciprocal Soviet action;

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

New negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on the reduction of short-range nuclear forces should begin shortly after signature of the Conventional Forces in Europe agreement;

With the total withdrawal of Soviet-stationed forces and the implementation of a Conventional Forces in Europe agreement, the Allies concerned can reduce their reliance on nuclear weapons. These will continue to fulfil an essential role in the overall strategy of the Alliance to prevent war by ensuring that there are no circumstances in which nuclear retaliation in response to military action might be discounted. However, in the transformed Europe, they will be able to adopt a new NATO strategy making nuclear forces truly weapons of last resort.

The Allies concerned will prepare a new Allied military strategy, moving away from forward defence, where appropriate, towards a reduced forward presence, and modifying flexible response to reflect a reduced reliance on nuclear weapons.

The Declaration calls for a more prominent role for the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, bringing together the countries of Europe and North America. The Declaration supports a CSCE summit later this year in Paris which would conclude the signature of a Conventional Forces in Europe agreement and set new standards for the establishment and preservation of free societies. The declaration also proposes that the CSCE summit decide how the CSCE can be institutionalized to provide a forum for wider political dialogue in a more united Europe. The Allies list a number of specific proposals to these ends.

With this Declaration, the Alliance has begun a major transformation. Working with all the countries of Europe, the Allies are determined to create enduring peace for this continent.

Mr. DONOWAKI (Japan): Mr. President, I should like to report on the result of the consultations on the question of a mandate for the establishment of the ad hoc committee on agenda item 1. However, since it is the first time I take the floor this month, please allow me to extend to you my delegation's congratulations on your assumption of the very important post of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation is pleased to see you in the Chair and to see that under your able and skilful guidance our work is making steady headway. In particular, the strong initiative you personally took by inviting co-ordinators of agenda item 1 to the last three presidential consultations contributed immensely to making it possible for us to arrive at the stage where we find ourselves today after so many months and so many years.

Now, I shall make a factual account of consultations conducted by my delegation on the question of a mandate for the establishment of the ad hoc committee on agenda item 1, "Nuclear test ban." As is well known, the consultation was initiated by my predecessor, Ambassador Yamada, when he was the President of the Conference in March last year. The Conference had been prevented from substantial work on the agenda item since 1984 due to the deadlock caused by conflicting group positions on the question of the mandate. Therefore, Ambassador Yamada embarked upon a process of a series of

(Mr. Dcnowaki, Japan)

dialogues with each delegation on an informal and individual basis, in search of a way to disentangle ourselves from the impasse. Successive Presidents for the remaining months of last year encouraged Ambassador Yamada to continue his consultations. As early as at the end of last year's session of the Conference, Ambassador Yamada was convinced that the draft mandate contained in CD/863, which in turn was produced by Ambassador Vejvoda when he was the President of the Conference in 1987, could in fact be used as a basis to work out a consensus mandate, and this was stated in Ambassador Yamada's farewell speech before he left Geneva.

At the beginning of this year's session of the Conference, as was stated by the President of the Conference at the time, Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands, I willingly agreed to continue the consultations initiated by my predecessor. As a result of the continued consultations, I also could reconfirm for myself the conviction that the draft mandate in CD/863 could be used to disentangle ourselves from the impasse of conflicting group positions. By the end of February this year, all the groups, except for the Group of 21, expressed their readiness to take the draft mandate contained in CD/863 as a basis for negotiating a consensus mandate, without prejudice to their respective preferred mandates. However, due to the non-negotiating character of the Vejvoda draft mandate, the Group of 21 had to take a little longer time to consult within the Group. On 14 March, at the presidential consultation which was presided over by Ambassador Azikiwe of Nigeria, and to which agenda item 1 co-ordinators were also invited, the Group of 21 stated that it would not object, without prejudice to its position on this question as set out in document CD/829, to the taking of the Vejvoda draft mandate as a point of departure for consultation aimed at reaching agreement on a mandate for the ad hoc committee, if all other delegations were prepared to do so. This demonstration of flexibility on the part of the Group of 21 was appreciated by all other groups. The delegation of the People's Republic of China also expressed its readiness to go along with whatever consensus was reached by all other groups, as well as its readiness to participate in the work of the ad hoc committee when it was established.

Thereafter, there were several occasions where agenda item 1 co-ordinators met either by themselves or at the presidential consultations upon invitation. At these meetings it became clear the the Group of Eastern European Countries and Others, as well as the People's Republic of China, could accept the draft mandate in CD/863 without any wording changes, if other groups could do the same. The Western Group could not express its views because delegations were waiting for instructions from their capitals. The Group of 21, although it did not propose any amendments, was not in a position to state that it could accept the draft mandate without any amendments before it was informed of the position of the Western Group. Thus, it was the turn for the Western Group to take time for consultation.

On 3 July, at an extraordinary presidential consultation convened by you, Mr. President, a Group of Western Countries informed all other groups that it decided to accept, in a spirit of compromise, the draft mandate contained in CD/863 without any changes, and proposed that other groups should do the same. The Group of Eastern European Countries and Others, as well as the People's Republic of China, expressed willingness to agree to the proposal, but the Group of 21 expressed its wish to be given a little more time.

(Mr. Donowaki, Japan)

Finally, on 11 July, at the presidential consultation, the Group of 21 informed the rest of the groups that it also decided to accept the draft mandate contained in CD/863 without any changes, in a spirit of compromise and flexibility, which was welcomed by all the rest of the groups.

Mr. President, it is with sentiments of profound gratitude to you personally, and also to all the delegations around this table, as well as to Secretary-General Ambassador Komatina and his deputy, Ambassador Berasategui, that I can report to you of the successful completion of my delegation's consultation on the question of the mandate for agenda item 1. On behalf of my predecessor and myself, and on behalf of my delegation, I wish to express our utmost appreciation of the warm words of encouragement expressed to us on a number of occasions, and also of the generous support and understanding extended to us during the last 16 months. My statement will be far from complete without expressing also our thankfulness to the dedicated wisdom of Ambassador Vejvoda of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic for leaving us with a very thoughtful draft text of a mandate which is no other than the one we have in front of us today. I would like to ask Ambassador Králik to convey my delegation's appreciation and best regards to Ambassador Vejvoda.

Lastly, let me add one further point. In 1982 and 1983, when we had an ad hoc committee on agenda item 1, two nuclear-weapon States did not participate in the work of the Ad hoc Committee, which was regretted by all the rest of the delegations at that time. This time, although the participation of France has not yet been promised, the People's Republic of China has, as I reported earlier, made it clear that it would participate in the work of the ad hoc committee when it is established, and I am confident that this very significant and very positive step taken by our Chinese colleague will be whole-heartedly welcomed by delegations around the table.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Japan for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. At the same time, I welcome the positive results achieved in the consultations undertaken by Ambassador Donowaki on a draft mandate for an ad hoc committee under agenda item 1. I am sure all members will agree with me that such results are the consequence of the active efforts of Ambassador Donowaki and his predecessor, Ambassador Yamada. Their skillful handling of this important subject, as well as their able diplomacy, have led to the present situation.

I already announced at the opening of this plenary meeting that we shall hold today an informal meeting to consider a number of organizational questions. Of course, the question of a draft mandate for an ad hoc committee under agenda item 1 should be addressed at that meeting, together with requests from non-Members to participate in our work.

If there is no objection, I shall proceed to suspend this plenary meeting and to hold an informal meeting of the Conference in five minutes' time. Immediately afterwards, we shall resume the plenary meeting in order to formalize any agreement reached at the informal meeting. Is that acceptable? I see no objection. I therefore declare the plenary meeting suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 10.35 a.m. and resumed at 10.45 a.m.

The PRESIDENT: The 565th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

As a result of the informal meeting just held, I invite the Conference to take action on several organizational questions. I suggest that we take up, first, document CD/WP.387, containing a draft decision for the mandate of an ad hoc committee under agenda item 1, entitled "Nuclear test ban". If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the draft decision.

It was so decided.

I shall now put before the Conference for decision the appointment of the representative of Japan, Ambassador Mitsuro Donowaki, as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee just re-established. I understand that there is agreement on his appointment.

It was so decided.

On behalf of the Conference and myself, I wish to extend to Ambassador Donowaki our warm congratulations on his appointment as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee. I am sure that he will discharge his heavy responsibilities with his well-known diplomatic skill and personal commitment, which he has shown in successfully conducting consultations on the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee.

As regards the first meeting of the Ad hoc Committee, I wish to inform the Conference that it will be held on Friday, 20 July, at 3 p.m., in this conference room.

May I ask whether any member wishes to take the floor at this stage?

Mr. DONOWAKI (Japan): I am indeed honoured and overwhelmed by the support and trust extended to me by you, Mr. President, and by all the Groups and delegations here. In accepting the nomination humbly, I wish to make myself clear about my willingness and readiness to serve as best I can all of you in chairing the work of the Ad hoc Committee which has just been established.

I certainly look forward to working together with all the delegations with the support of our secretariat, in trying to set ourselves on the right track in our quest for a truly meaningful approach with respect to the task assigned to us under the mandate which has just been adopted by us. The task entrusted to the Ad hoc Committee is of great importance and, at the same time, of enormous complexity with far-reaching political implications. How competent the Ad hoc Committee will be in dealing with the challenge is bound to be closely followed not only by our capitals but also by various quarters of the world outside this conference room. Whether our Ad hoc Committee will be able to make any meaningful progress in its deliberations of the agenda item will largely depend upon our own ability, resourcefulness and resolve. Therefore, as the newly appointed Chairman, while I pledge to dedicate myself to serving you as best I can, I humbly request all my colleagues to demonstrate as much as possible the spirit of compromise, co-operation and flexibility which has been demonstrated abundantly during the course of the consultations conducted by my delegation on the question of the mandate for agenda item 1.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): Mr. President, the Netherlands delegation is pleased to see you, the distinguished representative of Poland, in the Chair. My delegation feels confident about the execution of this month's business in the Conference on Disarmament because of your great experience, your high professional qualities, your long commitment to the cause of disarmament, and indeed your outstanding leadership.

Today I would like to make a statement on behalf of a Group of Western States and the wording of the statement is as follows:

"On behalf of the delegations of Australia, Belgium, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and of my own delegation, I would like to make a statement about the decision that we have just taken to establish an ad hoc committee under item 1 of our agenda.

Before addressing the subject matter itself, we would like to thank Ambassador Donowaki of Japan and, through him, his predecessor Ambassador Yamada, for the work they put into bringing the Conference to this point. We also congratulate Ambassador Donowaki on his appointment to chair the Ad hoc Committee. The consensus now established will permit our Conference to restart detailed work under this agenda item after a long delay.

We look forward to detailed discussion in the Committee of the various substantive issues relating to verification and compliance as well as structure and scope. We as a group and as individual States are ready to participate fully.

We are pleased that the Conference agreed that the Committee should be established taking the wording of the draft mandate contained in document CD/863, the work of our former President, Ambassador Vejvoda, without any change.

We are firmly of the belief that the Conference on Disarmament, as the only global multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament questions, is the most appropriate place for in-depth discussion of multilateral aspects of a nuclear test ban.

In our view, consideration of the question of a nuclear test ban is still at the exploratory stage. It is therefore proper that the mandate which we have given to the Committee does not require it to enter into negotiation of a treaty text. Before that stage can be reached there is much work to be done, examining the complex of issues appertaining to this topic, for which this mandate is completely adequate.

Since the Conference on Disarmament last had an ad hoc committee on this subject, much has been done relevant to the question of nuclear testing, and particularly in development and implementation of verification methods. We have in mind the important work of the Group of Scientific Experts, and, in the bilateral field, the procedures developed

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

by the United States and the Soviet Union for verification of the 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the 1976 Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty. However, much more needs to be done to address the full range of verification issues.

It should be noted that formation of this Committee is consistent with the principal aim of the Partial Test Ban Treaty, as restated in the preamble to the non-proliferation Treaty.

It is our conviction that we should use to the full the limited time available to the Committee in this latter part of the summer session. We would therefore propose that work should begin immediately with a preliminary exchange of views covering the whole range of issues and that the question of a detailed work programme should be looked at in parallel.

We believe that establishment of an ad hoc committee in the Conference on Disarmament to deal with a ban on nuclear testing will help us toward our ultimate goal: a world free of nuclear weapons, in peace and stability."

The PRESIDENT: Thank you for your statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of India, Ambassador Chadha.

Mr. CHADHA (India): I am taking the floor on behalf of the Group of 21. May I, at the outset, say how happy we are in the Group of 21 to see you, Sir, preside over our deliberations this month. We would like to pay a warm tribute to you and to Ambassadors Yamada and Donowaki for the untiring efforts which have led to the decision we have just taken for the establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on agenda item 1, entitled "Nuclear test ban", an event which has been anxiously awaited by the Group of 21 for so long. The Group would like to extend its felicitations to Ambassador Donowaki on his well-deserved election as the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee. We have no doubt that, with his experience and diplomatic skill, of which he has given ample evidence in the course of the informal consultations which made today's decision possible, he will be eminently successful in guiding the deliberations of the Ad hoc Committee to a fruitful conclusion.

No issue in the field of disarmament is more urgent and crucial today than putting an end to nuclear tests. A comprehensive test-ban treaty is long overdue. The Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating body has the primary role in negotiations to achieve this objective, and its achievement will enhance its credibility.

The objective of a nuclear test ban has been repeatedly emphasized in numerous documents adopted unanimously by the United Nations, including the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and in the declaration adopted by the Heads of State or Government of the Non-aligned Summit in Belgrade. As a significant contribution to the aim of halting and reversing the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, the Group of 21 has consistently advocated and has continued to attach the highest priority to a nuclear test ban. Despite this commitment of the

(Mr. Chadha, India)

international community, and the recent upturn in the world political climate, there has been no let-up in the qualitative improvement in nuclear weapons. It has been recognized that a ban on nuclear tests will contribute effectively to the arresting of the nuclear arms spiral.

Since 1984 the Group of 21 has made efforts to establish an ad hoc committee with an appropriate mandate on a nuclear test ban and has repeatedly demonstrated flexibility by advancing various proposals in the search for consensus towards this end. At the beginning of the annual session of the CD this year, the Group had again reiterated that the draft mandate contained in document CD/829 was best suited to accommodate the different positions of all delegations represented in the CD and constituted a sound basis for developing a consensus. This draft mandate had been found acceptable by the Group of Socialist States and the People's Republic of China.

In the spirit of further compromise and flexibility, and in order to facilitate the setting up of an ad hoc committee on item 1 in the CD, the Group of 21 had not objected to the taking of document CD/863 as a basis for a mandate for the ad hoc committee. Without prejudice to its continuing preference for a mandate like the one contained in CD/829, the group has decided not to object to the taking of CD/863 as a mandate for the establishment of the Ad hoc Committee this year.

The Group of 21 considers it essential that the setting up of the Ad hoc Committee should lead to concrete negotiations towards a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty on an urgent basis, and that the committee should not get bogged down in an endless debate on a work programme or on verification prerequisites while the central issue of negotiating a treaty on a nuclear test ban remains unresolved. In view of the fact that the Committee will function for a short period this year, the Group is of the opinion that the CD session next year should be fully utilized for attaining the goal of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty.

The Group of 21 is convinced that the available techniques of verification, both national and international, are already sufficient to support a comprehensive test-ban treaty, which should aim at 'he general and complete cessation of nuclear testing by all States in all environments for all time.

The international community has recognized that questions relating to verification and compliance can only be considered in tandem with other aspects of a treaty. Paragraph 31 of the Final Document of SSOD-I states: "Disarmament and arms limitation agreements should provide for adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned in order to create the necessary confidence and ensure that they are being observed by all parties. The form and modalities of the verification to be provided in any agreement depend upon and should be determined by the purposes, scope and nature of the agreement".

The Group believes that the nuclear test-ban treaty should be non-discriminatory and comprehensive in character so as to attract universal adherence and should include a verification system that is universal in its application, non-discriminatory its in nature, and guarantees equal access to all States.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you for your statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Dietze of the German Democratic Republic.

Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic): The Group of Eastern European and Other Countries, on whose behalf I have the honour to take the floor, welcomes the fact that, after years of consultations, the Conference on Disarmament is in a position to agree on a mandate for the Ad hoc Committee on item 1 of its agenda "Nuclear test ban". It reflects, in our opinion, the declared readiness and political resolve to start dealing with all aspects related to a nuclear test ban in the framework of the Ad hoc Committee to be established. This will give us the opportunity to do substantive work within the Conference on Disarmament on test ban issues, in general, and on related specific issues, such as structure and scope as well as verification and compliance.

Let me take this very occasion to express our appreciation to Ambassador Donawaki and, through him, to Ambassador Yamada for the strenuous efforts undertaken to reach consensus today, 45 years after the first nuclear test, on this crucial matter.

And let me also express our satisfaction that the mandate proposed in document CD/863 was a solid foundation to find a consensus.

Pursuant to the mandate agreed upon, the Ad hoc Committee will take into account all existing proposals and future initiatives. In addition, we believe that the Committee will draw upon the knowledge and experience accumulated over the years.

The Eastern Group would welcome it if the Ad hoc Committee would settle down to work as soon as possible. For that reason, we are prepared to start the work of the Ad hoc Committee immediately, based on the main elements contained in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of the mandate agreed upon just now. Such an approach would keep the momentum gathered and would allow us to proceed with the practical work related to a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

At the same time, the Eastern Group is supporting the idea that we should use the forthcoming months to prepare a more detailed programme of work for the Ad hoc Committee so that it can proceed with its work without delay at the beginning of the Conference's 1991 session.

Finally, I would like to use this opportunity to express the extreme pleasure felt by the delegations of the Eastern Group at seeing a representative of Japan presiding over the Ad hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban in the weeks to come. We are convinced that Ambassador Donowaki, thanks to his personal commitment, his great experience and diplomatic skill, will enable the Committee to gain the momentum to which I have already referred. I assure Ambassador Donowaki of our fullest support. I do this especially in my capacity as Group Co-ordinator for item 1 of our agenda.

Mr. HOU (China) (translated from Chinese): Since this is the first time for me to take the floor at the plenary meetings of the summer session, please allow me to express my appreciation and thanks to the distinguished Ambassador Oswaldo de Rivero of Peru, President in June, for the dynamic efforts he made which resulted in a very good start for the summer session. I wish him every success in the important work in which he is now engaged.

Respected Mr. President, I would also like to extend my warmest congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of July and my appreciation of the fruitful work that you have done. I am confident that, as the distinguished representative of Poland, with which China enjoys friendly relations, and with your rich experience and outstanding diplomatic skills, you will surely lead the negotiations to new achievements. In this respect, I would also like to assure you and all other delegations of the constructive co-operation of the Chinese delegation. I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to convey my warm welcome to the new heads of delegations, Ambassador Králík of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Ambassador Sinegeorgis of Ethiopia, Ambassador Ricupero of Brazil, Ambassador Chadha of India and Ambassador von Wagner of the Federal Republic of Germany. I sincerely wish them success in their new capacities. At the same time I would also like to express through you, Mr. President, the feeling of sadness of the Chinese delegation and of myself for the departure of Ambassador de Azambuja of Brazil, Ambassador Sharma of India, Ambassador von Stülpnagel of the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador Kostov of Bulgaria, Ambassador Bayart of Mongolia and Ambassador Varga of Hungary. We wish them all the best.

Mr. President, under your presidency, this plenary meeting has just adopted by consensus a decision on the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on item 1 of the agenda of the Conference, namely "Nuclear test ban". This marks a new progress made by the Conference in this field of great importance. The Chinese delegation would like to extend its congratulations to you and to all other delegations and express its appreciation for your energetic and effective inspirations, as well as the spirit of compromise manifested by all sides. Here I would like to mention in particular the tireless and unyielding efforts made by the distinguished Ambassador of Japan, Mr. Donowaki. The Chinese delegation congratulates the representative of Japan, a close neighbour of China, on his assumption of the chairmanship of the Ad hoc Committee and hopes that under his guidance the Ad hoc Committee will achieve substantive results.

Like all other countries of the international community, China has always attached a great importance to the question of a nuclear test ban, which is one of the priority issues on the Conference's agenda. The re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee after an interregnum of six years is the result of the strong demand and the relentless efforts of the whole international community in general and the vast number of third world countries, including the non-aligned countries in particular. For this reason, the Chinese delegation would like to express its appreciation to all sides concerned, and particularly the Group of 21, for their relentless efforts and outstanding contributions.

(Mr. Hou, China)

In his important statement made at the Conference on Disarmament not long ago, the Chinese Foreign Minister, Mr. Qian Qichen, expounded comprehensively the principles of the Chinese Government on the issues of nuclear disarmament and a nuclear test ban. Having all along stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all nuclear weapons and made unremitting efforts to this end, China sympathizes with, and understands, the ardent desire of the vast number of third world countries and other non-nuclear-weapon States for the early realization of a complete prohibition of nuclear tests. It is in this spirit that the Chinese delegation welcomes the statement on this issue of a nuclear test ban just made by the Group of 21. As is known, China has always exercised the utmost restraint and prudence as regards nuclear tests. China is actively preparing itself for its participation in the test of international seismic data exchange. Here I would like to reaffirm that the delegation of the People's Republic of China will take an active part in the work of the Ad hoc Committee and together with all other delegations work for the early materialization of a nuclear test ban and effective nuclear disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank you for your statement and for the kind words you addressed to the Chair. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I give the floor to the distinguished representative of France.

Mr. de la BAUME (France) (translated from French): As the Conference will have noted, my delegation did not object to the consensus on re-establishing an ad hoc committee on item 1 of the agenda, "Nuclear test ban", nor did we oppose the adoption of a mandate for the Ad hoc Committee in accordance with document CD/863.

However, my delegation would like to remind the Conference of the content of the statement it made in plenary on 18 July last year. I quote: "We shall refrain from participating in any exercise which corresponds to a conception of nuclear disarmament that we do not share". France's position of principle on the subject is well known and has not changed. My delegation will have occasion to revert to it at greater length when the time is ripe.

Mr. KENYON (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom was one of those Western member States on whose behalf Ambassador Wagenmakers has just spoken. We fully associate ourselves with his statement regarding the establishment of an ad hoc committee to discuss nuclear testing issues in accordance with item 1 of our agenda. We will play a full part in the work of the Committee. The policy of my Government on the matter of nuclear testing is well known. For the foreseeable future, the United Kingdom's security will depend on deterrence based, in part, on the possession of nuclear weapons. That will mean a continuing requirement to conduct underground nuclear tests to ensure that our nuclear weapons remain effective and up-to-date. A comprehensive test ban remains a long-term goal. Progress will be made only by a step-by-step approach. This must take account of technical advances on verification, as well as progress elsewhere in arms control and the attitude of other States. My delegation looks forward to discussing all these issues in the Ad hoc Committee. We hope its substantive work can begin soon so that some of the important ground can be covered in the weeks ahead. We plan to make an active contribution.

(Mr. Kenyon, United Kingdom)

Finally, may I add our congratulations to Ambassador Donowaki on his appointment to chair the Committee and his efforts in bringing about consensus on a mandate. This makes his appointment particularly appropriate. I am sure he will bring the same distinction to his new role as the Chairman of the Committee.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): The United States is also pleased that the Conference on Disarmament has now formed a committee to work on item 1 of its agenda, "Nuclear test ban". We have heard today important statements from Groups and from individual States. As a nuclear-weapon State with responsibilities to others that go beyond our own direct national defence and far beyond our national boundaries, the United States has a profound interest in this topic. The United States general views were also represented in the statement given a few minutes ago by Ambassador Wagenmakers on behalf of a group comprising most of the Western countries. But let me give the Conference some brief additional comments that relate to the national position of the United States.

The position of the United States with regard to a test ban has not changed. In a spirit of compromise to facilitate the formation of the Committee, we have set aside our reservations about document CD/863 and agreed to accept that non-negotiating text as the mandate. It is our intent to participate fully in the work of the Committee, listening carefully to the views of others, presenting our views and sharing the results of our research and relevant technologies. A comprehensive nuclear test ban remains a long-term United States objective. Such a ban must be viewed in the context of a time when the United States no longer needs to depend on nuclear deterrence to ensure international security and stability. And when the following have been achieved: broad, deep and verifiable arms reductions; greatly improved verification capabilities; expanded confidence-building measures; and greater balance in conventional forces.

In sum, the United States will continue to approach the question of a nuclear test ban with a step-by-step approach which takes into account the security criteria I just mentioned. Only in this way can we prudently preserve our security and the security of others to whom we have commitments as substantial political change proceeds in the international arena.

Mr. SMIDOVICH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): The USSR delegation fully subscribes to the views expressed by Ambassador Dietze in his statement on behalf of the Group of Eastern European and Other Countries, of which the Soviet Union is a member.

The USSR delegation intends to take a most active part in the work of the recently established Ad hoc Committee in all areas of its activity. The aim of our efforts remains unchanged: the earliest possible full ban on nuclear-weapon tests. The Soviet Union's main approaches to the achievement of this aim were set out in the statement by the Head of the USSR delegation to the Conference on Disarmament, S. Batsanov, on 28 June this year. Thank you very much.

The PRESIDENT: Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I see none.

I should like now to turn to the requests of two non-member States to participate at informal meetings of the Conference on the substance of agenda items 2 and 3. The note by the President is contained in document CD/WP.386. Are there any objections to the context of that note? I see no objection.

It was so decided.

In connection with the decision that we have just taken, I wish to note that the statement made by the President of the Conference at the resumed 534th plenary meeting applies also to the requests that we have just considered today.

I have no other business for today and I intend now to adjourn this plenary meeting. Before doing so, I should like to recall that the Conference will hold today an informal meeting on the substance of agenda item 2. I would also like to inform the members of the Group of 21 that, after the informal plenary session, the Group of 21 will have its Contact Group on negative security assurances in room C.108.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 19 July, at 10 a.m.

The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.